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Notes on the Assessment and Evaluation Staff, Office of Training

This organization exists primarily for the purpose of rendering professional psychological support to the Office of Training. Its secondary mission is to render psychological assessment support to the Clandestine Services. All services performed are advisory in nature, rendered only upon request and are non-definitive.

In its ^{role} roll of training support the Training Evaluation Branch consults with instructors on evaluation of students and evaluates the appropriateness of Training courses and tests. The organization has no professionals on duty other than the Chief of the Branch who devotes a large percentage of his time to collaboration with the Research and Validation Branch. During the survey it was noted that plans are underway to reduce voluminous training files to IBM cards. The Organization and Methods Service is willing to assist in developing these plans if desired.

The Research and Validation Branch exists largely for the purpose of validating the work done by the Assessment Branch and the Training Evaluation Branch. The validation of assessments has been slow in getting underway, but plans are being developed for performance follow-up on assessments. The research conducted here involves the processing and disseminating of professional material for the entire Assessment and Evaluation Staff. Advice is also rendered to the Staff on psychological tests. Several projects are in process involving research in training tests, psychological tests and the Junior Officer Trainee Program.

The Assessment Branch conducts psychological assessments on a highly selective basis. Its cases emanate largely from the Clandestine Services, either directly or through the various training courses of the Office of Training. Although this service is available to all of CIA, its customers as

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a practicality are largely within the Clandestine Services. The following quoted statement from DD/P reflects the nature of the case load.

"To utilize the facilities of the Assessment and Evaluation Staff of the Office of Training most effectively, requests for formal assessment will be limited to: (a) the evaluation of persons being considered for sensitive positions in which psychological hazards do or may exist or where detailed psychological information is useful or pertinent; (b) foreign indigenous persons on whom there is limited or inaccessible information; (c) prospective employees when a professional psychological opinion as to their suitability for clandestine or covert operations is required; (d) persons who are to be assigned to positions of higher responsibility substantially different from those previously held by the individual; (e) cases where an apparent conflict exists between the training reports and "on-the-job" performance. Formal assessment should not be requested as a substitute for: (a) careful screening and evaluation by responsible officials of candidates for employment; (b) proper evaluation of employee performance, which is the responsibility of supervisors; (c) straightforward disposition of personnel problems which obviously require no professional psychological evaluation."

During the period July 1-October 30, 1952, there were 170 assessments performed of which 159 were from the Clandestine Services and 11 were from the Security Office (Polygraph Operations^{ops}). This amounts to approximately 10 assessments per week. The assessment process requires about two days of assessment and testing plus an undetermined amount of time for appraisal of results, interpretation and report writing. The reports are designed to predict the suitability of the employee for the projected assignment. The reports are

sensitive, highly critical, non-definitive and applicable only to the job

in question. Report circulation must be done on a highly restricted basis and the contents thereof are misleading if read out of context. Upon request, psychological tests are conducted for the Psychiatric Division of the Medical Office and also upon request, information on file is furnished. It was noted that assessment reports recommending psychiatric referral were being sent back to the Clandestine Services, and it appears that this type of information should instead, be referred directly to the Medical Office for action. In addition, where evidence of emotional instability exists, the assessment report is incomplete until a psychiatric diagnosis has been made. The Chief of the Assessment Branch stated that his organization was concerned with the appraisal of such human qualities as leadership ability, ability to get along with people, mental ability, social adaptability, personality and suitability for job environment. He was of the opinion that he should refer by-product indications of mental disorders to the Medical Office for action.

The Assessment Branch also conducts one-day tests of all Junior Officer Trainees and is contemplating the rendering of assistance in determining the suitability of employees for career retention in CIA.